

Message Text

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15

ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 EA-11 ADP-00 SS-15 IO-13 L-03 SCI-06

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 USIA-12

PRS-01 NSC-10 AEC-11 ACDA-19 SAJ-01 MBFR-03 RSR-01

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R 250456 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1137

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CANBERRA 3477

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, SENV, TECH, AS, FR

SUBJ: FRENCH NUCLEAR TESTS: RAN SHIP DEPARTS JUNE 25
FOR TEST ZONE

REF: A) CANBERRA 3389 B) STATE 119542

1. IN WAKE OF ANNOUNCEMENT THAT INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE HAS REQUESTED FRANCE NOT TO PROCEED WITH TESTS UNTIL COURT HAS REACHED DECISION, GOA OVER WEEKEND ANNOUNCED THAT HMAS SUPPLY WOULD DEPART SYDNEY JUNE 25 FOR TEST ZONE. PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM QUOTED IN PRESS TO EFFECT THAT SUPPLY WOULD NOT GO INTO 120- MILE ZONE PROCLAIMED BY FRENCH AROUND TAHITI NOR WOULD IT SERVICE OTHER PROTEST VESSELS EXCEPT FOR NEW ZEALAND FRIGATE OTAGO. PRESS ALSO REPORTS THAT AMONG SUPPLY CREW OF ABOUT 200, THREE SAILORS HAVE BEEN EXEMPTED FROM TAKING PART IN THIS CRUISE BECAUSE OF " PERSONAL AND POLITICAL" REASONS. TEN ADDITIONAL MEMBERS OF CREW WERE APPARENTLY ALLOWED TO CLAIM " COMPASSIONATE" REASONS FOR NOT PARTICIPATING.

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2. ALUSNA'S CONTACTS DESCRIBE HMAS SUPPLY AS FLEET OILER WITH CAPABILITY OF MAKING 17.25 KNOTS ALTHOUGH USUAL STEAMING SPEED IS AROUND 14 KNOTS. IT IS ANTICIPATED SUPPLY WILL BE IN VICINITY OF FRENCH POLYNESIA WITHIN 10 TO 11 DAYS AFTER LEAVING SYDNEY. CONTACTS REPORT THAT CERTAIN AMOUNT OF NUCLEAR DETECTION EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN PUT ABOARD THE SUPPLY AND THAT RAN PERSONNEL TRAINED IN ATOMIC DETECTION WORK HAVE BEEN SECONDED TO PARTICIPATE IN CRUISE TO TAHITI ABOARD THE SUPPLY. THESE SOURCES ALSO STATE THAT NO CIVILIAN SCIENTISTS ARE INCLUDED. INFORMATION ON CHARACTER AND KIND OF NUCLEAR DETECTION EQUIPMENT IS NOT AVAILABLE AND IT IS NOT CLEAR TO WHAT EXTENT THIS EQUIPMENT WILL BE USEFUL IN MONITORING TESTS. IT IS GENERALLY ASSUMED, HOWEVER, THAT EQUIPMENT IS RELATIVELY UNSOPHISTICATED AND MAY NOT PROVIDE DETAILED INFORMATION OF KIND SOUGHT BY GOA.

3. LOCAL NEWSPAPERS ALSO REPORT ANTI-TEST DEMONSTRATION TOOK PLACE IN TAHITI OVER WEEKEND AT WHICH FRENCH RADICAL PARTY LEADER JEAN- JACQUES SERVAN- SCHREIVER AND FOUR OTHER FRENCH PARLIAMENTARIANS APPEARED. LOCAL REPORTS ALSO SAY THAT POLICE IN TAHITI ALLOWED DEMONSTRATION TO TAKE PLACE AS LONG AS IT RETAINED ITS PEACEFUL CHARACTER.
GREEN

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*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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